THE CASE OF Pluralities & Non-Residence RIGHTLY STATED:

In a Letter to the Author of a Book called, *A Defence of Pluralities*, &c. shewing the false Reasonings and evil Doctrines therein contained.

By an Impartial Hand, and a Hearty Well-wisher to the *Church of England*.

LONDON,

Printed for *Richard Baldwin*, at the *Oxford Arms-Inn*, in *Warwick-Lane*. 1694.

THE CASE OF Pluralities and Non-Residence Rightly Stated.

THE CASE OF Pluralities & Non Residence STATED:

In a Letter to the Author of a Book Called, A Defence of Pluralities, &c. Shewing the falle Reasonings and Dogmas therein contained.

1694
C337

By an Impartial Hand, and a Friend to the Church of England.

LONDON,
Printed for Richard Baldwin, at the Oxford-Arms, in Warwick-Lane. 1694.

THE CASE OF Pluralities and Non-Residence RIGHTLY STATED, &c.

SIR,

YOU have not thought fit to acquaint the World by what Name or Title you are dignified, or distinguished, or where you dwell: and if I should know where your Parsonage or Vicarage-House stands, your Book gives me reason to think, that if I directed my Letter thither, it would not find you at home. And therefore I know not

how to Salute you, but from the Press.

'Tis not my design to find fault with any thing in your Book which is honest, or tolerable. I shall pass over some expressions, which will not bear a Censure, and not call you to account for every undecent, or impertinent passage: and if you had dealt thus with those whom you call Antipluralists, I had had less to say to you.

You complain in your Introduction of some both of our Friends and Enemies, who have made too violent exclamations against Pluralities in general. But I desire you seriously to consider whether you have not been transported to the contrary extreme, and endeavoured to palliate and justifie some things, which are really blameable, and sinful: I know that upon all occasions men of your Spirit, when you are pursued by arguments, take your selves to the Church as a sure Sanctuary, and no man must undertake to question, or contradict what you say, upon peril of being lookt upon and treated as her Enemies.

Enemies. Though our Church pretends not to Infallibility, or Perfection; yet ſome who would be thought her choiceſt Sons, ſeem to affect ſomething very much like it. They endeavour to put the Stamp of her Authority upon their own private opinions, and even faults, and impeach all ſuch as will not admit them to be Current and Authentick, for Faction and Diſobedience. And I do not know that our excellent Church hath reaſon to be aſham'd of any thing more than ſuch Sons, who would perſwade the World that their perſonal faults are committed by her Authority, and countenanced by her Indulgence.

Such men as theſe, thinking to make amends for failure in what is their proper Duty, uſually overdo the buſineſs in bluſtring and talking for her, and in a ſuperconformity as to leſſer, and external matters; and, which looks very ugly in Clergymen, they uſually ſlight, and vilifie thoſe of their Brethren, who conſcientiouſly, and induſtriouſly diſcharge their duty, as a ſort of popular, and,

which amongſt them is ſcandal enough, moderate men, eſpecially if they upon any occaſion expreſs their diſlike of enormous Pluralities, and Non-Reſidence. Some of thoſe ſevere things which you ſay of ſome City-Preachers may be true. And yet I believe that moſt of them do more Service to the Church than any Non-reſident Pluraliſts, or even the Defender of them. They keep many in her boſome, and in tolerable conformity to her, who would ſoon be frighted into a Conventicle by a Miniſter of your temper.

But if they are to be blamed who Preach not ſo diſcretely as they ought, how much more ought you in juſtice to blame thoſe, who hardly Preach at all, at leaſt in ſuch places as they ſhould? And pray let me know by the next, what reaſon you have to be ſo very angry with thoſe honeſt Gentlemen, who whilſt they themſelves faithfully perform their Office, ſometimes reflect upon others for not doing the like, as to call them *Puritans*, *Infidels*, *Traditors*: and to treat thoſe who are guilty of the greateſt fault

that

that Miniſters well can be, *viz.* neglect of the Souls of People committed to their charge, ſo very gently? Let me know upon what grounds you deal with the former as Enemies to the Church, and not the latter. 'Tis natural for men who do their own duty, and bear the heat and burden of the day, to be moved at the negligence and lazineſs of them who ſhould be their Fellow-labourers, eſpecially if they find themſelves rewarded by their Superiours with nothing but Scorn, and Contempt; and the others puniſhed for their Idleneſs with the beſt Livings, and Preferments. 'Tis no wonder if ſome men concern'd have perhaps too deeply reſented, and warmly declared againſt ſuch proceedings. I am apt to think that if ſo deſerving a perſon, as your ſelf, Sir, ſhould have had the ill luck to have had your merits overlook'd, and gotten no Benefice at all, or a very mean one, and had ſeen many inferior to your ſelf in true worth, richly provided for, you might thereby have been provok'd to write as zealouſly againſt Pluralities, as you now write

for

Pag. 185. for them: *If yet a Soul oppreſs'd with poverty could ever have rais'd it ſelf to attempt any ſuch great deſign.*

You may wonder how I am got already almoſt to the end of your Book; but the reaſon of my referring to theſe words is, becauſe you ſeem plainly in that Paragraph to inform the World how you come to be an Author, *viz.* by your being a Pluraliſt and Non-reſident. For there you would perſwade us that hardly any but ſuch can be Writers. But if you have no excuſe for your abſence from, or neglect of your Cures, but this, take my word for it, you had better be amongſt your *Ruſticks*, as you are pleaſed to call your Pariſhioners.

Tho' if a man have a mind to be an Author, I do not know why he may not be ſo, and yet ſerve his Cures too. I deſpair ever to ſee you ſo effectually to ſerve the Church by writing, as the Bleſſed *Richard Hooker* did, who perform'd the Office of a diligent Paſtor, during the time of his writing thoſe moſt Excellent Books of *Eccl. Polity*. You are pleaſed to ſay, that

that *to your certain knowledge he had, and dyed poſſeſſed of very great Preferments*: and yet one may dare ſay he was no Pluraliſt, and Non-reſident; if he had, we ſhould have heard of that too. *Ibid.*

And here, Sir, I muſt tell you, that one grievous thing I have to charge you with, is that under a pretence of proving Plurality, and Non-reſidence, to be lawful *Jure Divino*, you undertake to ſay, that a Miniſter hath no obligation to perſonal labour in his Charge, and that he may if he pleaſe be abſent altogether from them.

Sit ſtill, O Pluraliſt, Eat, Drink and be Merry. Farm out your Benefices, and make the beſt of them. And let the Curate look to the diſcharge of your Conſcience, and Duty to God and the People. You have your Quietus *given you by our Author. There will never any account be required of you for the Souls of your People, nor your own neither.* For if Miniſters, and eſpecially Incumbents are not accountable for neglect of duty to the Souls intruſted with them, there is no reaſon to think that any

any other men ſhould be puniſhed in another World for the Non-performance of any other obligation whatſoever. And yet that you are guilty of doing this, appears from what you ſay in reference to the *Spaniſh* Biſhops in the Council of *Trent*, who would have had Reſidence of Biſhops to be declared neceſſary *Jure Divino*. Upon which *if the Spaniſh Biſhops*, ſay you, *had been aſked, whether the Reſidence which they aſſerted to be of Divine Right, included the whole year, or only part of it, they could not have agreed in it. If Reſidence of the whole Year were required by the Law of God, by what Authority did they appear in that place out of their Dioceſes*, &c. *If only partial Reſidence were required, who ſhould define how much God would accept, or how much might lawfully be ſpent out of their Dioceſes? It might have been alleged againſt them, that ſince God himſelf had revealed nothing as to this matter, it was an evident Argument that he intended no ſuch obligation:* So that according to your wiſe way of arguing, to reſide even any the leaſt part of a year in ones Biſhoprick is

Pag. 24, 25.

not

not neceſſary *Jure Divino.* And you do yet more openly aſſert this Doctrine, when you bring the Incumbent before the great Tribunal at the laſt day, and like a truſty Advocate for the Non-reſident Pluraliſt, you plead thus for him. *And then as to a Proxy, if the Prieſt allegeth that the ſame Authority of the Biſhop, which committed the Care of the Pariſh to him, did disburden him of that Care, and impoſed it in whole, or in part upon a Subſtitute, there is no reaſon to believe that God will not accept this plea.* Here you ſpeak out indeed, and all at once. For if a Cure may be *wholly* ſerved by a Subſtitute, and if God at the day of Judgment will accept of ſuch a Plea, then 'tis plain that all perſonal care and labour is unneceſſary. But, Sir, 'tis to be hoped *before that great and terrible day of the Lord's, comes*, you will learn more Seriouſneſs and Modeſty, than to think of preferring ſo thin and falſe an excuſe to ſo great a Judge. Pag. 33, 34.

A false Excuse I say. For what Statute, or Canon of the Realm, or Church of *England* doth authorize a Bishop to disburden an Incumbent of the Care of his Parish, and impose it *in whole* upon a Substitute? I know that Dispensations may be had for Local Non-residence. But I challenge you, or any Man else to produce any Authority that the Bishop hath, either by our Canon, or Statute-Law to transferr the Cure of Souls *wholly* from the Incumbent to another. Though when I consider you as an Antiquary, I have a good mind to revoke my challenge. For you may have Rods in Brine, and Canons perdue, which a Countrey Gentleman never heard of before. And we need not despair of having any thing made out by Men vers'd in such Studies, since we have had such Doctrines published as the genuine Product of the Church of *England* represented in Convocation, which the hundredth part of the Clergy themselves knew nothing of, till they had layn in the dark about 80 years, and were at last published, either

ther to prove ſome new Doctrine, or elſe for nothing at all.

But let me as a Friend once more remind you of that wretched Plea which it ſeems you intend to make for your ſelf and Brethren, at the laſt day; conſider of it again, and tell me whether you think it can paſs in that great Court: nay whether your own Conſcience, if you would let it ſpeak out, can vouch it, or rely upon it. I am ſo far from thinking that it will be accepted *by him who is greater than our Conſciences, and knoweth all things*, That a Civil or Eccleſiaſtick Judge would, or at leaſt ought to reject it. For 'tis certain if any Biſhop ſhould pretend to a power beyond Law, and Canon, and the Nature of things, all ſuch pretenſions would be vain both as to this World and another. And I believe 'tis as certain and true that no Biſhop of the Church of *England* as now eſtabliſhed did ever aſſume ſuch a ſort of Authority. If any Prelate had a faculty of looſing Men from the obligations to their People, I doubt not but he might have as much Cuſtom amongſt ſome of your Friends,

as

A false Excuse I say. For what Statute, or Canon of the Realm, or Church of *England* doth authorize a Bishop to disburden an Incumbent of the Care of his Parish, and impose it *in whole* upon a Substitute? I know that Dispensations may be had for Local Non-residence. But I challenge you, or any Man else to produce any Authority that the Bishop hath, either by our Canon, or Statute-Law to transferr the Cure of Souls *wholly* from the Incumbent to another. Though when I consider you as an Antiquary, I have a good mind to revoke my challenge. For you may have Rods in Brine, and Canons perdue, which a Countrey Gentleman never heard of before. And we need not despair of having any thing made out by Men vers'd in such Studies, since we have had such Doctrines published as the genuine Product of the Church of *England* represented in Convocation, which the hundredth part of the Clergy themselves knew nothing of, till they had layn in the dark about 80 years, and were at last published, either

ther to prove ſome new Doctrine, or elſe for nothing at all.

But let me as a Friend once more remind you of that wretched Plea which it ſeems you intend to make for your ſelf and Brethren, at the laſt day; conſider of it again, and tell me whether you think it can paſs in that great Court: nay whether your own Conſcience, if you would let it ſpeak out, can vouch it, or rely upon it. I am ſo far from thinking that it will be accepted *by him who is greater than our Conſciences, and knoweth all things*, That a Civil or Eccleſiaſtick Judge would, or at leaſt ought to reject it. For 'tis certain if any Biſhop ſhould pretend to a power beyond Law, and Canon, and the Nature of things, all ſuch pretenſions would be vain both as to this World and another. And I believe 'tis as certain and true that no Biſhop of the Church of *England* as now eſtabliſhed did ever aſſume ſuch a ſort of Authority. If any Prelate had a faculty of looſing Men from the obligations to their People, I doubt not but he might have as much Cuſtom amongſt ſome of your Friends,

as

as 'tis usually said that Priest might have who could procure a Commission for unmarrying People. And for ought I could ever yet learn, any Priest may as well and legally do the latter, as a Bishop the former.

The Notion of transferring the Charge from the Incumbent to the Curate is new, and, I hope, your own. I do believe that 'twas never heard of in General Council, Parliament, or Convocation. And if you have no better thoughts to communicate to that Reverend Body last mentioned, I hope you will never have the Vote of an honest Clergyman to sit in it. But when you write again, pray let us know by what Instruments, Letters, or Faculties a Bishop doth, or can release an Incumbent *wholly* from his charge, or in what Court such Letters Dispensatory can be procured. For I believe I know some who would give money for them: tho' I do not imagine any good Man would. For I do not think that any Humane Power can take off that obligation which every Minister hath upon him of personal Labour amongst his People.

I

I ſhall reduce what I have to ſay on this ſubject, to theſe following Propoſitions.

I. Tho' Plurality of Benefices be not in it ſelf contrary to the Law of God; yet for any one to take on himſelf ſuch Charges as he cannot, or will not perform, is.

II. Tho' Curates may be uſed for the more full, and perfect diſcharge of Duty; yet the whole Care of the people is not intruſted with them.

III. Tho' perpetual Local Reſidence be not injoined by God; yet to live ſo near the Cure, and to be actually reſident, ſo far forth as effectually to anſwer all the ends of the Miniſtry, is.

IV. Vicars by reaſon of their Oaths are obliged to Local Reſidence, unleſs they be diſpenſed with by the Biſhop

I. Tho' Plurality of Benefices be not in it self contrary to the Law of God; yet for any one to take on himself such Charges, as he cannot, or will not perform, is. It cannot indeed with any appearance of Truth be asserted, that 'tis unlawful to serve or have more Benefices than one. The Scriptures do neither in expres Terms, nor by any Consequence fairly to be drawn from them, prohibit it. And thus far we are agreed (I say) as to the Conclusion, tho' not as to the Premises. For one of the arguments by which you would prove this, is a meer Cavill: I mean that pag. 37 *&c.* where you undertake to conclude the Lawfulness of Pluralities *from the Authority, and Example of the primitive Church*; and that 'tis lawful to hold two Bishopricks, because some Primitive Bishops presided over two several Cities. Now did ever any one in his right Wits assert the Bounds, and Limits of Dioceses and Parishes to be fixed by a *Jus Divinum*? Do not you frequently throughout your Book suppose

poſe them to be conſtituted, and determined by Laws Humane, and Eccleſiaſtical? And if it be left to men to bound out the precincts, why may they not alter, unite and divide them as they pleaſe? The Primitive Examples you your ſelf anſwer, and prove them to be of no force by the Canon which you quote; part of which ſays, *Civitates prædictæ nunquam proprios Epiſcopos habuerunt.* For if thoſe Cities were never two diſtinct Dioceſes, then he who held them could not be a Dualiſt even according to your own argument, unleſs you take it for granted, That a Chriſtian City, *qua talis*, be a Biſhop's See, which I am ſure you will never be able to prove. Some of our preſent Dioceſes do indeed contain ſuch an extent of Land, as formerly made two: but how came they of old to be two, was it not meerly from humane Authority? and why may not things be altered by the ſame Power they were at firſt conſtituted? And therefore I am aſham'd to hear you trifle and cry out *Pag.* 39. *No humane*

Authority can make that lawful, which God and the Nature of things have made unlawful. Whoever ſaid that God and the nature of things divided Dioceſes, and Pariſhes? And what Child's play is it to talk as you do, *Pag.* 42. where you would prove the lawfulneſs of Pluralities from the lawfulneſs of one that is Biſhop of one Dioceſe, to undertake the Adminiſtration of another, during its vacancy, or the incapacity of him to whom it belongs? I will only obſerve that you make the Biſhop of *Sarum* to lead the Van in both Caſes, and look upon it not as an argument, but a Jeſt *ad hominem.* It ill becomes one who pretends ſo great a Reverence and Tenderneſs for the Order, as you do, always to be aiming at a Biſhop, and ſtudying to expoſe him; tho hitherto, God be thanked, you have expoſed your ſelf moſt of all. But if you do not take more care of your ſelf, you will become one of the Traditors before you are aware of it.

And

And yet, as I ſaid, though I agree not with you in this *medium*, yet thus far I agree with you in the Concluſion, That Plurality is not in it ſelf againſt the Divine Law: and conſidering the Poverty of ſome Churches, 'tis abſolutely neceſſary: and ſome men may better merit, and ſerve two, than others one; and therefore in God's Name let them have 'em. Yet,

No Man ought to have more Souls committed to his Charge than he can or will watch over. This doth evidently appear, both from the Law of Nature, and the Goſpel, whatever you pretend to the contrary. For I think it will be needleſs to prove that by them both we are oblig'd to perform our promiſes, and execute the ſeveral Offices we undertake: and unleſs you have forgotten your Vows, and Engagements plighted to God, and his People, at your Ordination, you cannot but know that 'tis the Vow and Office of a Presbyter of the Church of

England, to watch over and instruct the People committed to his charge. And he who shall say, that he is not obliged to serve in the Church committed to his charge, doth in effect renounce his Orders in the Church of *England*. And he who shall further assert, That he is not obliged by the Vows and Promises which he hath made (if they are not unlawful) doth in consequence renounce the Christian, and even Natural Religion. And he who undertakes any Engagements which he knows he cannot perform, or makes any Vows he resolves not to fulfill, in taking of them, he doth worse than break them. So that he who accepts so many, or great Benefices, as he cannot or will not look after, transgresses the Law of Christ and Nature too. But there are two things pretended in this Case. 1. The Dispensation of the Bishop. To which I answer, That there is no Dispensation to be had for perpetual Non-residence, and neglect of the People. Tho' I must confess the Dispensations

are

are larger than a good man would wiſh for; yet they will not come up to your purpoſe. You often indeed call upon the Biſhops to execute the Diſcipline of the Church, and to make Incumbents perform the Terms and Conditions of their Diſpenſation, that is, to Preach Thirteen times a Year in each Church, and to reſide two Months, which is too little in all conſcience: and yet as little as it is, I do not doubt but if the good Biſhops ſhould take you at your word, and ſend you and your Brethren to labour amongſt your *Ruſticks*, you would think your ſelves ſeverely handled, and look on it as a harder impoſition, than that which the Parliament lays upon you, and be ready to cry out of an eleventh Perſecution.

I ſhould look on that Pluraliſt to have ſomething of Conſcience, who having gotten two of the beſt Livings in Thirty Miles diſtance, ſhould do at leaſt what the Canon, and his Diſpenſation requires of him. 'Tis

but a low pitch of vertue to be just so good as the Law of Man would have us; and yet it were well, if such as you defend (especially your dear self) could do but this. Your Dispensations, which you now plead in your own defence, shall hereafter rise up in Judgment against you. For I know many Pluralists, (and I believe, Sir, you know one at least) who Preach not half so often, and reside not half so much upon both their Livings, as they ought to do in each. And yet after all, if the Dispensation were as full as you could desire, it would certainly be invalid, as tending to the Breach of Vows, which no Christian Bishop can pretend to without usurping a Papal Power. He who shall undertake to annull a Minister's Vows of feeding the People committed to his charge, may by the same Authority dispense with my Oath of Allegiance, or with those Natural duties which I owe to my Parents or Children.

But

But ſome have anſwered, That theſe Vows and Promiſes are to be taken in a legal ſence, and are qualified by thoſe words, *according to the Order of this Church of England*: ſo that he who takes no more Liberty than the Canons of this Church allow, cannot juſtly be accuſed for violation of his Faith.

But *1ſt.* The Church allows no ſuch liberty as that of perpetual Non-reſidence, and neglect of labour, as is already proved.

2dly, Theſe words do not at all affect our obligation to perſonal labour, and therefore cannot in the leaſt mitigate or abate it. And that this may appear, I will ſet down the whole Queſtion, of which theſe words are part. *Do you think in your heart that you be truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Order of this Church of* England, *to the Order, and Miniſtry of Prieſthood?* And I need only ſet them down, to ſhew that they do not at all

all concern the present Controversie. And 'tis the only instance of modesty, which you have given us in your whole Book, that you have not so much as mentioned this Argument, as some miscall it. But

Further, another plea whereby you endeavour to wash off the Clergymans obligation to labour among his People, and which seems to be the πρῶτον ψεῦδος, the fundamental Error of your whole Book, is, *that Ministers are not ordained to one Diocese, or Parish, but to the Catholick Church*, Pag. 43. *& passim*. Tho' you acknowledge so much of the truth, *viz.* That *good order and discipline do require that the exercise of their Office be confined to some certain limits, and place*, as will determine every good man against the Conclusion you would draw from it. For if he who sits not down on his Cures, and will not confine the exercise of his Office to the Church, or Churches intrusted with him, do break discipline, and good order; 'tis plain that he is guilty

ty of a great crime. But I ſhall further ſhew that this Notion of a Miniſter's being ordained not to this or that Pariſh or Dioceſe, but to the Univerſal Church, is falſe. Not but that upon occaſion he may exerciſe his Function in any part of the Church, and upon whatever ſhore he is caſt, he ought not to be re-ordained: but that when he enters into Orders, he is deſign'd for the ſervice of ſome particular Church, or Dioceſe, more than of the whole.

As for the Church of *England*, ſhe ordains none (except in one or two ſpecial Caſes, which cannot break a rule) *ſine certo Titulo.* And in the Office for ordering of Prieſts, among other queſtions asked by the Biſhop, this is one, *Will you maintain and ſet forward Quietneſs, Peace and Love amongſt all Chriſtian people, and eſpecially among them that are, or ſhall be committed to your charge?* And your ſelf I preſume have made anſwer to it in the words of the Office, *I will do ſo, the Lord being my Helper.* Can. 33.

Now

Now in this queſtion, other Chriſtian People are contradiſtinguiſhed to thoſe of your Cure, and in the anſwer you oblige your ſelf to proſecute your duty more eſpecially amongſt the latter.

But you that would be called the true Sons of the Church of *England*, write and act as if you were ſo much her fondlings, as that you had a particular priviledge of contradicting her. You can be very ſevere upon your Brethren of the Clergy *who mutilate or diſuſe her Ceremonies*: but think it no fault in your ſelves almoſt, or altogether to lay aſide the exerciſe of your Functions, at leaſt in ſuch places as the Canons and Conſtitutions of the Church do peculiarly require your labours. I know no labouring Clergy of our Church who do mutilate or diſuſe her Ceremonies: but if I did, I ſhould think them more excuſable who do ſomething of their duty, than they who wholly neglect it. And, Sir, 'Tis ſuch as theſe that betray her Cauſe, that open the mouths of

of her Adversaries, and give just occasion of scandal: And let me tell you, That you are partaker of these mens sins, by pretending to justify them.

And, take my word for it, the Church is very little beholden to you for your doing so: especially since you have made bold with her, for a little arguments sake, so far as to contradict her Offices and Canons. But alas! Canons and Rubricks, and such like things were not made for Authors, and Grand Pluralists. They are so far from being obliged to obey them, that one would think they never read, or at least remembred them. Otherwise how could any one who did not think himself above Canons, confidently assert, That Priests are not ordained to this or that Parish; but to serve the Church of God in general, when the Church has solemnly decreed, That they are, or ought to be ordained to some particular Cure, and obliges them there more especially to prosecute their Office.

And

And even in the Primitive and Apostolical Churches Men were not ordained so much for the service of the whole, as of one particular Diocese. The Apostles themselves were indeed Catholick Bishops in the largest sence, and had a Commission to *teach all Nations*, and had every one of them *the care of all the Churches*. But tho' they did not themselves sit down, and take up their Residence in any particular Diocese: yet they constituted distinct and setled Governours for every Church as soon as it was raised. Thus St. *Timothy* was created Bishop of *Ephesus*, *Titus* of *Crete*; *Linus*, or *Cletus*, or both, of *Rome* even during the Apostles lives.

And as Bishops were then design'd for every particular Diocese; so as the Number of the Christians grew, 'twas absolutely necessary that they should have Presbyters subservient to them. And 'tis evident that those Presbyters did not only live in subjection to the Bishops of those distinct Dioceses to which they were ordain-

ordained, ſo long as themſelves thought fit; but were obliged not to leave them without the conſent of the Dioceſan. And when the Levity of ſome prompted them to break this ſtanding Cuſtome of the Church, there were Canons made to confine all Biſhops and Presbyters to the Service of that Dioceſe to which they were firſt ordained. And there is only this difference between the Primitive Platform, and our own, *viz.* That in the former Presbyters were ordained not for the Service of one particular Congregation, but of the whole Dioceſe, to ſerve the Biſhop in the more full and perfect diſcharge of his Office, to be ſent to ſuch parts of the Dioceſe, and for ſuch a time as the Biſhop thought fit: whereas by our Conſtitution every Presbyter has his particular Allotment, and his diſtinct Dividend in the endowments, and labours of the Church. But they were no more deſigned for the Service of the Church at large in thoſe days, than they are now.

If

If we enquire why every particular Presbyter had not his distinct Cure allotted him in the primitive Church, we must needs allow it to be its infant and unsetled State: So that when the Empire came into the Church, and Christianity began to be the Religion of *Rome* and *Greece*, all Churches soon fell into a Parochial Division. And that so early, that at the Council of *Chalcedon* it seems to have been a general Establishment, for there it is provided, that *No one shall be ordained a Priest or Deacon at large* (ἀσύγχυτοι μένειν) *to be at his own Liberty, but should be assigned particularly* (ἰδικῶς) *to some Church either in the City or in a Village, or Martyrdome, or Monastery.* I know you are not willing to allow Parish-Priests or Churches to have been generally constituted at this time; but I think this is a better Authority for it, than you can produce against it. It could not indeed be so early in our Church, which was then under a Cloud, Barbarism and Infidelity generally prevailing in these Islands.

Can. 6.

Now

Now briefly to recapitulate what hath been said on this Head. Since the Ministry is an Office, and therefore duly to be executed; since the Church in all Ages hath confined the Exercise of this Office chiefly to the Diocese, or Parish to which Ministers are ordained, or instituted; since the Church of *England* in particular exacts of them whom she ordains, solemn Vows, and promises *to instruct, and teach the People committed to their charge, to give wholsom Exhortations both to the sick and whole within their Cures, to administer Christian Doctrines, and Sacraments to them, to drive away all erroneous and strange Doctrine, to maintain peace and love as much as in them lyeth amongst their Parishioners.* Since this cannot be done without personal care, and labour, and since the Church requires it at their hands, and neither doth nor can dispence with their Neglect; it necessarily follows, that they who undertake such Cures as they

are not able to discharge, or so many Churches as they cannot duly watch over, do in undertaking them, grosly sin: And that they who have promised and are able to perform, but will not, do violate their Faith made solemnly to God and his People.

And what I have now said, concludes against you in two points.

First, According to your Hypothesis there are no bounds set to Pluralities by the Law of God (tho' the Church be so severe as to stint you to two) but that a Man may have as many as he can get, and have served by Curates. Your Reason against Pluralities being unlawful is, *That there is no mention made of Parish-Priests, or Churches, in Holy Scripture, and therefore there can be no directions concerning them*, pag. 17. Now after this way of arguing it follows, That he who shall procure a 100 Benefices or ten times more, doth not transgress the Divine Law.

And

And therefore *Bogo de Clare* and *Adam de Stratton* pag. 143. are clearly brought off from trespassing against the divine Law, though the latter had 23 Benefices in one Province, and the other you know not how many in both. For you tell us plainly pag. 141, 142. *That whereas Arch-Bishop* Pecham *inveigh'd against Plurality of Benefices as a mortal sin, he proceeded upon a false Principle.* ('Tis pity you did not live in those days, for I verily believe that you might have saved this honest *Adam* the 30000 Marks and upwards which *Edward* the first fined him for Corruption in the Exchequer, (if it were the same man, as probably it was) I am sure you might as easily have proved that taking of Bribes was no Mortal Sin, as that such enormous Pluralities were not so.) And pag. 195. having fairly reckoned up all the faults of Extravagant and Irregular Pluralists, yet you cannot find in your heart to call them directly sinful, but only matter *of great Inconvenience to*

the Church, and Scandal to Religion. And every one knows that a thing may be Inconvenient, and Scandalous, and yet have no intrinsic evil in it. Especially if the Scandal be only taken, and not given. O how sweetly do you treat your Brethren the Non-Resident Pluralists. One of these may break all the Ten Commandments with less reproof from you, than a poor industrious Clergy-man omit a Ceremony. He that doth the latter is in your language *a Traditor, an Infidel, or* (which with you perhaps is worse) *a Puritan*; but the other, tho' *he behave himself as though he cared not for the Souls of his People, tho' he think himself wholly disburthened of the Cure of Souls* (as you had already taught them to do) *by delegating it to a Curate, tho' he put no bounds to the desire of Pluralities, tho he neglect Alms, and Hospitality, and suffer his houses to be dilapidated*, pag. 193. And tho' he do half a hundred more such ugly tricks, all this is only inconvenient and offensive.

Now

Now upon this Suppoſition, *viz.* That Pluralities, though never ſo numerous, are not contrary to the Divine Law, there needs but one metropolitan Biſhop in all Chriſtendom, (a Pope you may call him if you pleaſe) ſo that he maintain a great Army of Stipendiary Suffragans, and (which is a Doctrine which I think the World never heard of before) but one incumbent Presbyter under him maintaining Legions of Curates in every Kingdom. For if it be not a mortal ſin to have 23 Benefices, how do you prove it ſo to have as many hundred, or thouſand. 'Twould indeed be *Scandalous*, *i. e.* weak Brethren might take offence at it. But you will ſay 'tis pity ſuch a Conſtitution ſhould be ſinful. Oh! what a rare Author would ſuch a brave fellow as this Univerſal Presbyter make? he might write a whole Vatican full of Books, and gratify you perhaps ſo far as to enable you to continue writing lit-

tle Defences, and to make such wonderful discoveries as you have lately, in acquainting the World how many Children Bishop *O.* had, for starting the project.

But I am afraid you will be angry with me for spoiling this new invention, as I think I have effectually done. For if every one who is instituted in a Living be oblig'd personally to take care of it; then he, who undertakes more or greater Cures than he is capable of looking after, sins in doing of it.

But another ill consequence of your Hypothesis is, That Livings may be held at never so great a distance. So that for ought appears in your Book to the contrary, nay by what is there asserted, it is lawful *jure Divino* for a Man to hold 3 or more Benefices, whereof one we will suppose situate in *Britaine*, the second in *Japan*, and the third in *Peru*, (and I fancy you would

would chuse a Golden one) why may they not be 30 Degrees distant as well as 30 Miles according to your way of arguing, *Forasmuch as the Livings cannot personally be supplied in any sence* pag. 28. But if it be true which I have laid down, *viz.* That 'tis unlawful to take two Benefices or more, which you cannot personally, and very frequently supply; if it be necessary that he who hath solemnly accepted the charge of any people, be by his Office, and other additional obligations tyed to watch over their Souls, to deliver to them the whole Council of God, and to be ready on all occasions to preserve them from Error, and Discord, and the like Spiritual Evils; then it clearly follows that 'tis contrary to the Law of God to take the charge of two or more livings so far distant from each other, that it shall be morally impossible for him in any measure personally to supply them both. The Church indeed allows of 30 Miles

distance, tho' the Canons of 1571. permit but 26. But I do not think it an argument of an affectionate and ingenuous Son to stretch the favours of his indulgent Mother, or to run to the utmost bounds which she hath set him. 'Tis as difficult for a Man to determine the precise distance, which is lawful, as to prescribe the number of Glasses which any Man may drink, without exceeding the rules of Temperance. And yet I dare say you will agree with me that 30 together are too many for one who designs to keep himself sober: And so without doubt is 30 Miles distance of Churches too great for that Man who intends conscientiously to discharge his Office. And this is certainly true generally speaking. But considering the great strength of some mens Brains or Bodies; I will not determine that this number is absolutely excessive, and unlawful in either Cases. Tho' I think I may with decency enough say that the Church allows this great distance, only

only *for the hardneſs of ſome mens hearts.*

'Tis the ſafeſt way in ſuch caſes to take care that you do not make uſe of that *Liberty* which the Church hath given you *for an occaſion to the fleſh*, to Covetouſneſs, and filthy Lucre. But I proceed to ſhew that,

II. Tho' Curates may be uſed, yet the whole care of the people is not intruſted with them. I am ſo far from thinking it unlawful to keep a Curate, that I rather judge it commendable, where the Living will bear one, and the people are any thing numerous. For though a man have no greater a charge than that he himſelf may ſerve the neceſſities of; yet he may not ſo well anſwer all the conveniences, and reaſonable deſires of the people in his own perſon. There are many Incumbents, who may *fulfill their Miniſtry* by their own labour, at leaſt ſo far as to keep them-

themſelves *free from the bloud* of the People, and yet might diſcharge their truſt much more to the edification, and ſatisfaction of the people, and their own Conſciences by the aſſiſtance of another. And there is no reaſon to think that it is more unlawful for a Clergyman than for any other Officer, or Workman, to have an Aſſiſtant. And it would be of excellent uſe to the Church, if ſuch as are deſigned for Incumbents were all for ſome time trained up under the care of grave and experienced Clergy-men, that by practiſing under them, acting by their directions, and influenced by their example, they might be better verſed in ſo great a buſineſs, than young Incumbents uſually are.

But yet I am far from thinking that the whole care of the people is or ought to be intruſted with Curates. 'Tis plain it is not in our Church: becauſe no Incumbent is or can be acquitted from that obligation,

gation, which he voluntarily took upon himself of caring for, and feeding the Souls of his people; and therefore is obliged to do it, notwithstanding he have a Curate to help him. I have before shewed that your Notion of transferring the obligation from the Incumbent to the Curate is groundless. And in all the forms of Licences to serve a Cure which I have seen, there is not any thing contained, that implies the Curate to have the sole Care of the people. 'Tis true indeed, in such Churches as have no Ecclesiastical person incumbent on them by reason of all the Tithes being impropriated, either the Curate must do all, or else it cannot be done. But I know you look on this as an odious case, and lament the condition of such Churches as much as any Clergyman in *England*. From anomalies nothing can be proved, or brought into a Rule. I doubt not but there are many learned, and pious Curates in the Church, who do as much for the

the People as if they were their Rectors, or Vicars; and 'tis pity they are not. I do not ſpeak this to diſcourage their honeſt labours, but only to ſhew the neglect of thoſe who employ them. And the generality of Curates cannot but know that the great, and primary charge belongs to the Incumbent: and cannot think it reaſonable that for a third, or perhaps a ſixth, or tenth part of the Profits, he is obliged to do ſo much as the Rector, or Vicar, for the whole: on the contrary the Incumbent, if we may judge of all by you, thinks that if he pay for ſerving the Cure, he himſelf is disburdened of all obligations. And ſo the Pariſh has the name of two Miniſters, but in effect not one.

In caſe of Age or Sickneſs, or any other neceſſary diſability to perform all the duty required of an Incumbent, 'tis to be ſure ſufficient to do *what in him lyeth*, as the

the Office of Ordination expreſſeth it. He muſt then be forced to make uſe of anothers Mouth and Hands to Preach, and pray and deliver Sacraments to the People. And yet it will be ſome ſatisfaction to a Conſciencious Paſtor, if he be able to direct his Curate, and to ſee that he do that which now he himſelf cannot, and to take care that his people want nothing that is neceſſary, or proper for their Souls health. And 'twere well if ſome Incumbents would do but thus much even during their health, and ſtrength, tho I don't think that this is ſufficient to acquit ſuch before God.

And this brings me to the caſe of Deacon-Incumbents. For you ſay *p.* 136. that *to manifeſt more fully that 'twas never the deſign in the firſt Inſtitution of Parochial Cures that they ſhould in all caſes be ſupplied by the Incumbent in perſon, I will add this obſervation, That from the beginning of Parochial Cures*

Deacons

Deacons were admitted to poſſeſs them, altho it were notorious that they could not execute the Office perſonally: Since they could neither abſolve penitents, nor celebrate the Sacrament of the Euchariſt. I do not think you have proved what you ſay, namely that *from the beginning of Parochial Cures, Deacons were admitted to poſſeſs them.* The firſt Authority which you produce for it in the *Gallican* Church, is in the year 744. Whereas *this Parochial diviſion was long before introduced in* France, *namely, at furtheſt in the year* 630, if we may believe what you ſay *Pag.* 84. Corruptions may be introduced in 114 years. And if I were diſpoſed to be troubleſome, I might very well deny either the Canon, or Capitular which you quote, *Pag.* 137, to prove that Deacons were then allowed of for Incumbents: but let it be ſo, you ſhall for this one time have your will. Deacons have formerly been allowed to be Incumbents, and perhaps from the

firſt

first beginning of Parochial Churches; therefore it follows, say you, that the Church never designed that Cures in all Cases should be supplied by the Incumbents. But doth it from thence follow, that he is not obliged to do any thing? Because he could not absolve, and celebrate the Eucharist, doth it from thence follow, that he had no obligation to Baptize the Children, visit, and anoint the Sick, carry the consecrated Elements to them? give them occasional advice, Catechise them in the Principles of Religion, and do those things which daily were required in every Parish; and what, if he made use of an Assistant to do the rest, so long as he did not think himself disburdened of doing what he could? A Minister disabled in his Hands by the Gout or Palsy, may without question make use of another to administer the Sacraments to his People, and yet by his diligence in other duties deserve a double proportion of Ho-

Honour, and Maintenance. However this case of Deacon-Incumbents doth not at all serve the purpose of the Clergy of the now *Church of England.* For 'tis plain that the allowance of them was lookt upon as a Corruption by the Church and State; and therefore it hath been reformed by the Act of Uniformity. And if the former permission of it were an argument that the Church did not then require Incumbents personally to supply their Cures; then the present prohibition doth as strongly prove that now she doth. And to what end are all Incumbents obliged to be in Priests Orders, but only that they may be capable of performing all Holy Offices in their Cures, unless by natural infirmities disabled? I have particularly considered the force of this allegation: because it looks the most like an argument of any thing in your Book. But,

III. Though

III. Though perpetual local Reſidence be not required by the Law of God, yet to live ſo near the Cure, and to be actually reſident ſo far forth as to anſwer all the ends of the Miniſtry, is. I am ſo far of your mind, as that God and Nature have made no particular Laws to appoint on what ſpot of ground the Miniſter's houſe ſhall ſtand: but yet, 'tis abſolutely required that he ſhould watch over the flock; and therefore it neceſſarily follows, that he muſt be ſo much amongſt them, and dwell ſo near them, as that he may effectually perform this duty. 'Tis a thing highly proper perpetually to reſide, where it can be done with any tolerable ſafety, or accommodation. He that doth ſo may have more frequent opportunities of doing good, and may more eaſily, and throughly diſcharge his Conſcience: and ſome Cures cannot be faithfully ſerved but by reſident Miniſters, by reaſon of the multitude of Pariſhioners, and their daily occaſions. And in

such cases 'tis without doubt as necessary that the Minister should reside, as it is that he should perform his duty, and vows. However, so near all ought to dwell, and so often to be with their Parishioners, as that no Soul may be in danger of perishing, no necessary duty neglected through their absence. And indeed generally speaking, dwelling in the Parish where a man is beneficed is so very requisite, that it were very much to be desired that those Incumbents who have not an important excuse to the contrary, were forced to legal, and local residence.

When I speak of residence and dwelling in the Parish, I mean it in the same sense that any plain Englishman will take it, *viz.* making it the place of abode, and rambling abroad as little as may be, or as is consistent with the greater business, which every Minister hath lying upon his hands. I say this, to remind you of your little banters,

Pag.

Pag. 26. &c. *Suppoſe*, ſay you, *the Incumbent lives not here*, (viz. *within the bounds of his Pariſh*) *but* 100 *yards further*, &c. *and* Pag. 27. *If ten diſtance miles be allowed, why not* 20 *or* 30? You might have added 100, or 1000. For your argument is indefinite, and pleads for 10000 miles diſtance as well as ten. The caſe of the Spaniſh Biſhops is ſo remarkable, that I muſt mention it again. *Pag.* 24. You ask them *whether the Reſidence, which they aſſerted to be of Divine Right, included the whole year, or only part of it. If Reſidence of the whole year were required by the Law of God, by what warrant did they appear in that place* (viz. *Trent*) *out of their Dioceſes*, or, &c. *If only partial reſidence were required, who ſhould define how much God would accept it, might have been alledged— that ſince God himſelf had revealed nothing as to this matter, it is an evident Argument he intended no ſuch obligation.* Has God revealed nothing as to this matter? Yes he has revealed this, that *you muſt give an*

account of the people. Heb. 13. 17. And no man can give an account of all, and therefore by *People* must be meant those who are peculiarly committed to your Charge: he hath told you by the Apostle, that you must take heed to the Flock, and be instant in season, and out of season; and this you cannot do, if you live too far distant from them. God hath been pleased in this, and many other particulars, only to give you the general heads of your duty. He commands us to be sober, to avoid Covetousness, and worldly Cares; to pray often, *&c.* without prescribing the nice quantity of liquor, or meat, that we may use; without stinting men to a certain number of hours, or tale of Prayers: and yet there certainly are quantities and hours, which if we do not observe, we transgress these duties. So 'tis in the case before us, God hath only commanded Ministers in general terms to be very instant, and urgent to oversee, and take care of the People,

People, without telling us how far, or how long they may be abſent from them. And yet with all your little Sophiſtry you will never be able to wipe off the force of theſe Laws.

But you have paſſed, or reported a Jeſt in the beginning of your Book, which puts me in mind of a parallel Inſtance. A man is obliged to take care of his own, and to dwell with his Wife, and that by the Law of God: but yet, if you were a married man, and had caught a ſhe *Tartar*, whom you would be willing to ſhake off; you might according to your way of arguing, make this Dilemma: If a man be obliged to dwell with his Wife, and reſide with his Family, he is either obliged to dwell in the ſame Houſe or Room with them, and that perpetually, and without any intermiſſion; or elſe at a ſmall diſtance, and only part of his time: if the former be true, then he muſt never be from Pag. 29.

home, tho upon the most necessary occasions, or even to make provision for his Family: but if he may live the next wall to them, and be sometimes out for a day or a week, then why not altogether? For to use your own words, *since God himself has revealed nothing as to this matter*, (*i.e.* the precise time or space of being without Wives) *'tis an evident argument, he intended no such obligation*, and so you might get rid of your Wife without the formality of a Process, or appealing to the Ecclesiastical Consistory. Is not this pretty Tattle, and is not yours just the same? For your argument against the necessity of partial residence runs thus. If a Minister may be absent sometimes, as suppose to go to Convocation, or to buy Books at *London*; why may he not as well be absent the whole year? if he may dwell Ten Yards out of his Parish, why not as many, or three times as many Miles? So that the Conventicle-Preacher when he would have proved Residence

dence to be *Jure Divino* from thoſe words, *Abraham begat Iſaac*, Mat. 1. 2. might not argue ſo much at random, as you your ſelf do.

And pray obſerve that you have proved more than (I hope) you deſigned, if you have proved any thing at all. For if neither Biſhops nor Incumbent Presbyters be obliged to be reſident in their Charges any part of the year, pray who ſhall look after them? what ſtipendiary Curates? Why the Scriptures make no more mention of them, than of *Parochial Conſtables*, as you your ſelf ſpeak. And therefore, according to your way of talk, there is no Proviſion made by the Law of God for the Cure of Souls. You ought by all means to have ſhewed who they are who are *Jure Divino* obliged to take care of the People, before you had diſmiſs'd the Biſhops Incumbent Presbyters from that Service.

But that which you chiefly labour at, and in proof of which half your Book was written, is to shew that serving Cures by a Proxy, and leaving all (but the Tithes) to the Curate, is not contrary to the first design of Parochial Endowments. And, in order to this, you present us with a long History of the first Institution of Parochial Churches, which is the best part of your Book, and therefore least to your purpose. And to what end you tell us this Tale of about 100 pages long I can't Divine. For I do not believe that one single Consequence can be drawn from this relation of yours which favours your conceits of unlimited Plurality, and Total Non-residence. You wisely excuse your self *pag.* 115. *from framing the particular deductions, lest you should seem to question, or injure the Judgment of your Reader.* A man would rather think that you put this task upon your Reader, because it was too hard for your self. The chief Heads I shall mention, and

and ſhew how they make for you. *pag.* 58. You tell us *'twas long e'er Pariſh-Churches were inſtituted, longer before they were endowed.* What, would you infer from hence, that when they were inſtituted, and endowed, the particular perſons deſign'd, and collated to them, were not obliged to ſerve, and officiate in them? Nothing elſe will ſerve your turn, and yet no ſuch concluſion can be drawn from theſe premiſes. What tho the office of a Parochial Prieſt be new? yet an Office it is, and muſt faithfully be diſcharged, or elſe thoſe that have it conferred on them, render themſelves obnoxious both to the Laws of God and Man, eſpecially if any ſupervening obligations of vows, and promiſes require it of us. Any alteration in the Circumſtances of affairs, any new Commands of Superiors (if they be not unlawful) may lay new tyes upon our Conſciences.

You

Ibid. You tell us, that *all Oblations made at theſe Churches were at firſt tranſmitted to the Biſhop, who generally divided them into four parts, took one for his own maintenance, aſſigned another to the Clergy, a third to repair the Edifices, and a fourth to the Poor.* Now if you could prove that the Biſhop having all at his diſpoſal, allowed him a dividend who did not Preach or labour, this would be for your purpoſe; or if you had ſhewed that tho a Prieſt neglected the Buſineſs, or People to whom he was ſent, and never came near the Church to which he was commanded, had yet his ſhare in the Dividend, this would look your way. I am perſwaded 'tis as eaſie to prove the unlawfulneſs of Non-reſidence from the firſt of *Geneſis*, as to conclude the non-neceſſity of it from ſuch premiſſes as theſe.

But further you aſſert, *pag.* 59. that *the firſt and general deſign of endowing Parochial Churches was, that a competent number of Clergy might be*

be maintained, who under the Biſhop ſhould ſupply the whole Dioceſe: But if ſo, what need theſe endowments be fixed to theſe Parochial Churches? why were they not rather beſtowed on the Biſhop, or the Mother Cathedral Church? The end which you pretend had been altogether as well ſerved by this means, *viz.* the maintaining a competent number of Clergy to ſerve the Dioceſe in ſacred matters. It ſounds very odly and improbably, that our Anceſtors endowed one particular Parochial Church, that ſo by this endowment, ſome Clergy-man might be enabled to ſerve in other parts of the Dioceſe. Any one who had not a mind to impoſe on himſelf, or others, would rather think, that when an Eſtate was ſettled on any particular Church, the deſign of the Donor chiefly was that he who ſerved in it ſhould have the profit of it: unleſs we imagine thoſe Pious Men to have had ſuch tricks in their Heads as thoſe in the beginning of our late Confuſions, who pretending a zeal for the Re-

Revenues of the Church, founded Lectures in the City out of Impropriations purchaſed in the remoteſt parts of the Kingdom. But before I diſmiſs this point, let me obſerve to you that by your own confeſſion, the Endowments of Parochial Churches were only deſigned to maintain the Clergy who were employed in that Dioceſe, whereof the Church ſo endowed was a Member: and therefore this (if true) would not juſtifie thoſe, who being Beneficed in one Dioceſe, beſtow their labour, or live lazily in another.

The ſecond deſign, you ſay, *was to provide for the Convenience of every particular Pariſh*, and you might as well have call'd this the firſt reaſon: *this you ſay was permitted to the direction of the Biſhop to alter it at diſcretion.* And you do not tell us upon what grounds you ſay this, I ſuppoſe it was only to introduce what follows, *viz.* pag. 61. *if it be more for the good of the Dioceſe*

or Church in general, That any Presbyter ſhould retain Plurality of Benefices, or be Non-reſident at one or both of them, then it's more conſonant to the firſt deſign of Endowments, That ſuch Plurality ſhould be allowed, and Non-reſidence diſpenſed with, than otherwiſe; but you ought to have proved that Biſhops pretended to any ſuch power as that of Diſpenſations, when Pariſh-Churches were firſt endowed, or that the Founders did dream of a thing, which was not in uſe till long after. We have only your *Ipſe dixit* for this whole matter; beſide, what you writ over Night, you contradict next Morning, as you ſhall hear by and by. Farther I look upon that which you call the good of the Dioceſe, or Church in general, to be no more than the enriching and eaſing ſome few of the Clergy. 'Tis ſurely moſt for the good of the Dioceſe, and whole Church, that ſuch Clergymen as are moſt able to do good, ſhould be diſperſed amongſt the ſeveral parts, and Regions of it. And whatever

ver was the design of the Clergy in receiving these endowments, there is no Question to be made, but the Thanes or great Men who were the givers of them, (and by whose intentions we are to be determined in this matter) respected chiefly the convenience of those Parishes, where they erected Churches. The whole Diocese was in some measure provided for before out of the common Stock or Treasury: And therefore the main end that Founders could propose in setling Estates upon particular Parish-Churches, could not be any other than the constant Supply thereof in Divine things.

Pag. 90. And to make what I say more plain, you tell us that *Bishops endowed some parochial Churches for the convenience of their Tenants.* Now how can it be reconciled to common Sence, *viz.* That Bishops had this primary design in erecting, and endowing these Churches, not that the Parishes so endowed might have

have a Priest constantly attending, so much as that the whole Diocese might be supplied with a competent Number of Clergymen; when whatever he gave, according to your Notion, belonged before to the common Stock of the Diocese: and so the design of maintaining a competent Number of Clergy was as well served before this Endowment, as afterward.

The sum of what need be said on this matter is, That whatever meaning the Bishop and Clergy had in accepting these Endowments (which yet I believe were very honest, and far otherwise than you would have us think) for certain those who gave them did chiefly intend the good and convenience of that Parish, where they setled a Maintenance. And all Rules of Gratitude and Piety oblige us to apply all Endowments according to the Will of the Donours. And at first they could not so much as suspect, that their designs should be

be eluded. Forasmuch as in that age the Notion of serving a Cure by Proxy was not started. And that that this was their first Intention, you your self after having made a great stir, and bustle, do at last humbly acknowledge; For pag. 85, 86, 87. You tell us that *Parish-Priests and Churches were not generally settled till the Bishops consented that the whole Revenue of the Endowment were perpetually annexed to the Church of that Clerk who received it*, *i.e.* in plain English, till the Incumbent might have the Estate belonging to the Church in which he served; and not only so, but before these great Men could generally be brought to settle their Endowments, *Parish-Priests were forbid to quit their Cures without the leave of their Diocesan*, pag. 88. Now what is the reason that these good men would not part with their worldly goods to encrease the common Treasure of the Diocese, since as you tell us, *pag.* 59. the first and general design of these endowments

ments was to maintain a competent number of Clergy to ſerve the Dioceſe? what made them ſo ſhy, and backward in their Benefactions, till they were aſſured the Incumbent ſhould have all, and that he who miniſtred ſhould have the Endowments, & that thoſe who were at firſt inſtituted on a Benefice ſhould not eaſily be diſmiſſed from it? Truth will out, and after all your forced ſtuffe and whipt Creame, you can't forbear to contradict your ſelf, and in effect to give up your Cauſe.

Formerly, that is before the 8*th* Century (as you tell us) all Oblations, and Profits were at the diſpoſal of the Biſhop, ſo that no one who gave any thing to the officiating Miniſter, or endowed a Church, could be ſure that he who laboured ſhould have the Penny: and beſides, Clergy-men were light and unconſtant, and often forſook their Cures, and no one would ſtay at a Church any longer than he thought fit, but

pag. 85. *Before the year 800, these two reasons, which chiefly discouraged the Erection and Endowment of Parish-Churches were taken away.* But suppose these well-meaning Gentlemen had foreseen any such things, as perpetual Non-residence, and serving Cures by Substitutes, would not this have stopt their Charity? For by this means it is again brought about, That the particular Endowments of any Parish *do only increase the Common Treasure of the Diocese*, or some particular men sometimes in, sometimes out of it; and the Church is no better served than if it had no more than a bare Competence for the Curate. Why should not the old Thanes be as well satisfied in having the Revenues of the Church at the absolute disposal of the Diocesan, as of one, who was to do little or nothing for it, and seldom see the Parishioners, but when he came to poll them? So that those who were the best Benefactors

nefactors to the Church, and to whose Piety under God the Clergy owe their present Subsistence, were in no one thing more abused than by the Permission of enormous Pluralities, and idle Incumbents.

For the time to come you had better keep your Antiquities in your Common Place-Book, than gratifie your itch in vending of them, when they so little serve your purpose, that they do the quite contrary. And I believe on reading over what you had writ, you were sensible of it, and therefore seem willing to compound the matter, *pag.* 152, *as supposing that in* 1100 *years time the circumstances of things may be altered.* But then what need all this Pother about the first Institution, and Endowment of Parochial Churches? Whether personal Abour were required in the old *Gallick*, or *English-Saxonick* Church, or not? 'tis certain now it is.

You are indeed so inconsistent and unresolved in this whole matter, That 'twill be a very difficult thing to reconcile *Anthony* to *Harmer*. Pag. 73. You tell us, *in the seventh Century, there were none but Itinerant Preachers*: nay, in the 8th Century, or the year 731 *there were no other but Pluralist Clergymen, who had not the care of any particular Parish; but executed their Office in this or that, or all the Churches of the Diocese, as the Bishop should direct them*, pag. 74. and yet before you had writ three Pages more, you were quite of another mind, for you tell us that *about the year 700, Oratories and Churches were erected and endowed with peculiar Maintenance for the Incumbent, which should there reside, and execute the holy Function*. pag. 77. And you say the reason why before the year 800, Parochial divisions were not generally received was, *because Incumbents thro' levity would often quit*

quit their Churches. pag. 85. So that ſometimes there were none but Itinerants, before the *8th* Century; at other times you tell us there were notwithſtanding this, Incumbents too, who were conſtantly to reſide: or when you have a mind to it there were Incumbents: but when you think it for your purpoſe, you can preſently annihilate them again. Nay, do but put your two great impediments of the Parochial Settlement together, and they will break one another in pieces. *For the firſt was, that the Biſhop had the Diſpoſition of all the Oblations, and Profits. The ſecond was, that Presbyters would leave their Churches in hopes of getting richer.* pag. 85, 87. But now if all were at the Biſhop's diſpoſal, and he that officiated had not the Eſtate, wherefore ſhould he deſire a richer Church? If ſome Churches were richer to the Presbyter than other, how was all at the Biſhop's diſpoſal? When you

have reconciled your self to your self, and let me know where I may find you, you may hear further from me. You have here asserted I can't tell what, but I am sure palpable contradictions.

However you have sufficiently cleared these two points, *viz.* That before Parochial Endowments were compleated, the Bishop *pag.* 85, 86. *condescended* to part with his right of disposing the Ecclesiastical Revenues; because otherwise the Laymen would not condescend to Endow any more Churches; and, That *all Parish-Priests were forbid to quit their Cures without the leave of their Diocesan, and it was ordered that at their Institution, or before their Ordination, the Clergy should promise to remain at that place to which they were ordained,* pag. 88, 89, which is contrary enough to what you undertook to prove. *That Plu-*

Plurality (by which you mean holding any number of Benefices, tho' at never so great a distance,) *is not contrary to the first design of Parochial Endowments.* But hitherto you have only talked like a man that wanted to be drove to his Church, where he is Incumbent; but under the next Head you Discourse after so lewd a manner, as that you deserve to be laght out of it, as shall presently appear.

IV. Vicars are by their Oaths obliged to local residence, unless they be dispensed with. For if they be, they are obliged no more than Rectors. The Oath of Residence injoined to be taken by Vicars at their Institution is, *You shall Swear to reside on your Vicarage of N. unless you shall be dispensed with to the contrary*; so that he who is dispensed with, is not by virtue of this Oath tyed to re-

ſidence. But to be ſo far reſident as effectually to anſwer all the deſign, and ends of the Miniſtry, is a thing in it ſelf neceſſary, whether this Oath be taken or not, and therefore can't be diſpenſed. The Law by *reſidence* never means any thing elſe but living in the Pariſh where you are beneficed. Now tho' this be not always abſolutely neceſſary, yet 'tis neceſſary for that perſon who having ſworn thus to do, except he be diſpenſed with, is not diſpenſed withall.

And every one who knows any thing of an Oath hath therefore juſt cauſe to wonder at that braſen, and wicked aſſertion of yours, *pag.* 116, 117. viz. *Vicars cant in conſcience be impleaded of Perjury againſt their Oath of Reſidence, who being Non-reſident, maintain Curates conſtantly reſiding.* How! not they guilty of Perjury; who having ſworn

ſworn reſidence do not reſide! In God's Name, who then can be guilty of that Sin? If indeed you had ſaid that Vicars having the Biſhop's Diſpenſation are not forſworn if they are Non-reſident, you had ſaid truth. But the neceſſity of a Diſpenſation you neither ſuppoſe nor allow of. For your reaſon is only this, *ibidem; The Law is beſt interpreted by its known deſign, and that the known deſign of this Canon was that no Parochial Church ſhould be deſtitute of the preſence of a Prieſt, which muſt needs have happened, if Vicars had been permitted to be Non-reſident, becauſe they had but juſt enough to maintain themſelves: and the Canon makes no proviſion for Vicars able to maintain a Curate, becauſe then there were none ſuch.* Now in all this the neceſſity of the Biſhop's Diſpenſation is not ſo much as intimated or imply'd, which yet is the only thing that can ſave Non-reſident Vicars from down right Perjury. And all that you ſay

Vid. Bp. of B. and W's. Charge.

say to palliate it, is but meer stuff, and Sham.

You tell us that when this Canon was made, *there were no Vicars able to maintain Curates*; but for this we have only your bare word, and many probabilities to the contrary. 'Tis acknowledged that in the time of *Stephen Langton* Archbishop of *Canterbury*, Five Marks were determined to be a competent allowance for a Vicar. But many Vicarages had been erected long before this time, and those who had them were *ab origine* obliged to Residence. And though there may some few instances be produced of Vicarages, which were not above this value, yet this doth by no means prove that there were none which had better maintenance.

Fur-

Further, though the Law may best be interpreted by the known design of it, yet no plain, express, literal injunctions of any Law are disannulled by pretending that from the design of the Law no such Conclusions can be drawn. The design of the Law may give us light in some particulars, which would otherwise be obscure, and difficult; or may serve to explain the meaning of any Oath, by it ordered to be taken. But this sure is the first time, that the intention of the Law was urged as a reason, why an Oath prescribed by it, should be of no validity. And further it is plain that the design of that Canon, by which it was injoyned, was not only to secure the constant presence of a Priest in every Parish, but that the Vicar himself should be constantly present. This appears from the Oath it self. For all Incumbents whe-

whether Rectors or Vicars, if absent, must maintain a Curate whether they will or no, and whether the Revenue be small or great: and if this had been the only design, Rectors would have been injoyned to take it as well as Vicars. And yet Rectors, tho their Benefices were not above Five Marks *per annum* value, were never obliged to take this Oath. And I conceive the true reason of Vicars being sworn to Residence, was that old rule, *Vicarius non habet Vicarium*, a Curate (for such were all Vicars originally) is not allowed to have a Curate. And though the reason of this Canon now ceases, since Vicars are properly Incumbents, yet the Canon it self remains in force, or else all our Bishops, and Vicars General are mistaken.

Some

Some indeed are of opinion that Desuetude, & *Remotio causæ* when they meet together are sufficient to abrogate any Law. But so long as it is daily executed, no one must say that 'tis abolished, tho the occasion of it seemeth to be taken away. You indeed seem to argue as if you thought the Canon it self antiquated. But no Subject of any Society must take the Liberty of interpreting away Laws, which he sees his Governours daily to exercise, upon pretence that the reason of them ceases. That the Law was at first made to oblige Vicars to actual Residence, you your self acknowledge, and the Law remaining the same, 'tis not in the Power of any single Clergyman though he be a Pluralist, nay though he were Universal Incumbent of all the Benefices in Christendom, to alter the sense and first intention of it. And residence by a Curate is such a

Resi-

Residence as neither Law nor common sense admits of.

Thus you see the Canon is in force, and therefore to be obeyed whether enforced with an Oath or not. And whether the Canon be in force or otherwise, yet I am sure the Oath is with all such as have taken it, and have any Conscience at all. A man who hath upon Oath promised to do any thing, is obliged without all controversie to perform it, whether it were a Canonical Oath, or not, unless the thing he promised were sinful. And indeed you act, and talk, as if you thought Residence to be so.

Thus, Sir, I have endeavoured truly to state the Case of Plurality and Non-residence. And tho I have not done it with so much Art and Cunning, as you; yet I

am

am satisfied that I have placed it upon a better foundation, and used much more impartiality than you, though I have written some things with a just resentment. But before I part with you, I must take leave to reflect on some passages in your Book, which I have not yet touch'd upon.

You say, *pag.* 134. *Certainly it conduceth more to the Interest, Honour, and support of Religion in general, and the good of the whole Diocese in particular, that ten or more Prebendaries, Persons of extraordinary merit, should constantly attend at the Cathedral Church, seated in the chief City of the Diocese, to see the Worship of God performed with decent solemnity, to instruct the Inhabitants of a Populous City, and to advise the Bishop upon all occasions; than that ten little Country Villages should be supplied*

plied by the constant personal attendance of the Incumbents of their Churches. This may all be very well allowed, except the supposition that these *extraordinary persons* must needs be Incumbents of Country Churches. For why should these excellent men, who are capable of doing more good elsewhere encumber themselves with Rectories, or Vicarages so far remote from the Cathedral, that they cannot attend them both? It is very requisite that City-Churches should be supplied by the most able, and Eminent of the Clergy: But then why do these great men usually decline City Cures? For 'tis not the Dean and Chapter, but the Incumbents of the several Parish-Churches, who are generally interested in the Cure of Souls in Cities. By supplying the City Churches they might indeed do great service to Religion: But this is not to be effected by only

ly officiating, and that rarely in the Cathedral. If you object that the Livings in lesser Cities are usually very mean, and unworthy of such deserving men; it may be answered that their Prebends would make good amends for that, generally speaking. And though Country-Livings are oftentimes of greater value, yet it must be considered that when the Curate is paid, the remainder will very little exceed the usual allowance of a City-Minister. And I do not know any one thing wherein the High-Court of Parliament could do a greater Benefit to the Church, than in annexing a Church or two of the Neighbouring City to every Prebend of the Cathedral, and indispensably obliging the Clergymen who injoyed them to perform personal Service in them. For I cannot believe that faction could lead Captive so great

numbers of men in these populous Cities, if such deserving men, as many Dignitaries are, did but bestir themselves, and do their best, in countermining the designs of our adversaries by their Zeal, and industry in watching over the People. And if we look into such places, we shall find very little sign of care and pains that hath been used by the Clergy in retaining or reducing men to the sober principles of the Church of *England*; for Dissenters are scarce any where more numerous, than in these Cities. And though I know several other reasons may be given for it, yet I cannot help believing that one great occasion of it is, that such Parish-Churches are not generally served by the ablest men, and oftentimes by good Choristers, rather than good Ministers. A good Song or Antheme may render a man

very agreeable company, and a good neighbour; but ſuch perſons cannot uſually compoſe themſelves to that ſerioufneſs of mind, and earneſtneſs of Piety, and Study, as to make themſelves ſucceſsful in their labours in populous and cenſorious Cities. I ſhall not take further notice of thoſe particular good deſigns, which our reformers had in continuing theſe Corporations: you reckon them up well enough, and I wiſh you could ſay that theſe great ends were ſerved by them at this time. And till they are, I am ſure that they had better be doing good in their Rural Benefices, if they have any, than ſpend their time in the Cathedral in doing nothing at all, or at moſt, in only *ſeeing* Divine Worſhip perform'd with decent Solemnity. That nothing can excuſe them from perſonal labours in their Cures, but ſome

invincible Necessity, I have already shew'd, and few of them think themselves obliged to reside in the Cathedral above two months in the year, or thereabouts. And for the remaining part of their time I do not know where they can better be disposed of than amongst their Parishioners.

Another passage is *pag.* 138, 139. *It is more for the Interest of the Church, and Religion in general, that men of eminent Learning should attend in the Courts of Princes*, &c. This may very well be allowed of; but doth it from thence follow that these men must undertake other charges inconsistent with this attendance? But if you hereby mean the King's Chaplains; I do not think that the time of their attendance will be any great

great impediment to the Cure of Souls elsewhere. And if these *eminent men* vouchsafe to take on them the charge of a *few Rusticks*, (as you in contempt call them who should be your care, and Crown) surely they will not think it below themselves to take care of them too. What tho' they *may learn as much as they are capable of from the meanest Curate?* Yet it may be well supposed that such great and good men as you speak of, may have a greater Influence over them, that what they say may make more impression, may be received with a more attentive mind, and fall with a greater weight; and by doing more good amongst them than a poor Curate can; they may more effectually win and reconcile them to their Duty. And they may do this, and yet not be wanting to their Prince

at the ſtated times and courſes of attendance. But if they affect to be at Court, when they have no buſineſs there, but their own, and when that is nothing elſe but to ſolicite for preferment, to wriggle into the favour of great men, to injoy better company, or indulge their Genius more than they can amongſt their *Ruſticks*; it muſt be acknowledged that this will be a great hinderance to the ſerving their Cures, and doing their real buſineſs. And is it not pity that men ſhould not be diſpenſed with *for thus proſecuting the good of the Church elſewhere?*

As for Noblemen's Chaplains, who being beneficed, do actually attend, the number of them is ſo ſmall, that you might have ſav'd your ſelf the trouble of apologiſing for them. If they have

Bene-

Benefices or Cures, they are generally so near their Lords Houses, that they may attend both together. And Noblemen generally are unwilling to take men off from the business of their Cures, and make more conscience of being the occasion of Ministers not residing, than perhaps you would have them You give us some Instances of Great Men, and Honourable Personages, who retained Domestick Chaplains in times of old: but you are at a loss it seems in that which you ought to have proved, *viz.* That any of these Domesticks had charges elsewhere. And till you can shew this, you say nothing to the purpose. Pag. 138.

You plead likewise for Archbishops and Bishops having Chaplains in their Houses, *pag.* 139. And sure no good-natur'd man

would abate them that Privilege? But that they are so *necessary to be subservient to them in the Government of the Church* is a new Notion. I believe the Prebendaries, and experienced Clergymen of the Diocese might do the Bishops better Service in this particular. You have found out an Office for them, which the Canons, and Constitutions of the Church never gave them. As for the governing of the Church, 'tis to be hoped that every Diocese affords men better qualified to assist the Bishop in it than his Chaplains, who are just come from ruling Lads in the Universities; and who themselves sometimes are hardly of age to be Church-wardens.

But tho' Bishops ought to be allowed Chaplains, yet it doth not necessarily follow that they ought

ought to continue in their attendance, after they are well beneficed. Prelates are generally in a Capacity to confer or procure Benefices for their Domesticks so near their Houses, that they may in some measure attend both together. And if they cannot do this, yet they have usually either Prebends (*though the Archbishop have but three*, pag. 18. as you seem with some concern to observe) or *fine* Cures to gratifie their Chaplains with, which, one would think, might suffice, till they could with convenience dismiss them. A little care and resolution might soon take off this objection.

Now I suppose by this time you have put me down, if you know my Name, for one of the Traditors. And I thank you for providing me such excellent company

pany. For it ſeems Archbiſhop *Williams* was one of them, *pag.* 12. and the preſent Biſhop of *Salisbury* is in your account a notorious one, nay, and the Archbiſhop himſelf muſt come into the number for Licenſing his Book, and encouraging the Author to write it. But let me tell you, Sir, that I neither underſtand your manners, nor wit, in fixing ſuch an odious Character upon ſo deſervedly great men: Nor can I ſee how the compellation fits them. For, I never heard that they, or any other of the Clergy, whom you are ſo ſevere upon, ever reſigned their Bibles, or renounced their Religion, as the Traditors of old did: Nay, they have given greater demonſtrations of their Courage, and Zeal in maintaining them, than ever can be expected from you: So that I cannot make Sence of the

V. Bp. of St. Paſtoral Care pag. 250.

the expression, unless you take it for granted that the permission of Pluralities, and Non-residence, be as necessary to Religion, as the old and New Testament. You say, *they betray the Outguards of Religion*: I know not what you mean by the Outguards: But I am sure enormous Plurality, and neglect of Cures cannot justly be so called, This is rather the Breach at which Seducers enter in. For if the most Eminent of the Clergy would once in earnest set about their proper business, I should not doubt, but that Schism and Confusion would gradually lessen, and perhaps at last altogether disappear.

Your charity runs high, when you say, *you will not lay the imputation of Infidelity upon all Antipluralists*, pag. 12. *because some*, you hope, *acted upon a mistaken zeal, and*

and falſe prejudices: But it ſhould ſeem as for the reſt you cannot abate them an Inch of this Charge. So that all are Infidels with you, who do not believe the Lawfulneſs, and Convenience of Pluralities, and Non-reſidence, unleſs invincible ignorance excuſe them. Now this is an Article which the Church of *Rome* hath not yet got into her Creed, but probably they will put it into the next Edition, eſpecially ſince you have ſilenced the *Spaniſh* Biſhops, who were the main oppoſers of it.

The bitterneſs of your ſtile, and your unchriſtian way of writing would provoke a man to retort the accuſation, and throw back the ill language upon your ſelf, and your Brethren: But in meer pity to you I forbear, as knowing that Grand

and

and Non-resident Pluralists are the most unfit men in the World to undergo such severe Penances as were of old inflicted on the Traitors.

Your, &c.

FINIS.